SMOKE YOUR COMPETITION WITH THESE 36 APP IDEAS
A 12 MONTH GUIDE
12 MONTHS OF APPS
36 total app ideas

January
- 12 Months of Giveaways
- Support App
- Most-Popular Resources

February
- Super Bowl Poll
- Valentine’s Day Gift-Giving
- President’s Day Deal

March
- March Madness Guess-the-Final-Four
- SXSW Instagram Giveaway
- Saint Patrick’s Day Happy Hour

April
- Virtual Gifts Easter App
- Earth Day Sweepstakes
- All-In-One Blog

May
- Cinco de Mayo Printable In-Store Coupon
- Mother’s Day Product Feature
- Memorial Day Weekend Instagram Contest

June
- Summer Pinterest Boards
- Incentivized Promotion
- Limited-Time-Only Promotion

July
- Fourth of July Quiz
- Kooky Holiday Save-the-Date
- Summer Promotion

August
- Back-to-School Giveaway or Coupon
- School-Themed Photo-Voting Contest
- Philanthropic Map

September
- Labor Day Pin and Win Contest
- Thank You App
- Swap Ideas App

October
- Subscribe and Receive a Coupon
- Essay Promotion
- Halloween Instagram Video Contest
- **Bonus**: Two Timeline Promotions Ideas for October

November
- Food Drive App
- Fall Recipes Display
- Black Friday or Cyber Monday RSVP

December
- Free Shipping Day Promo Code
- Super Saturday Printable Coupon
- Extended Christmas Giveaway
January App Ideas

Just because the holiday season is over doesn't mean you can take a vacation from your social media efforts. January marks the beginning of a new year! Which means this is actually one of the best times to work to set your business up for year-long success.

To help you make the most of this fresh start, we've got three app ideas in this PDF. The purpose of the three app ideas is threefold: to quickly capture new Timeline visitors' attention, to improve your business's efficiency throughout the year and to incentivize users to become your fans.

Let's get started!

presented by
SHORTSTACK
January is the ideal month to start new initiatives that have the potential to boost your business throughout the rest of the year. One easy way to do this: consistent monthly giveaways.

Giveaways are important to your business because they attract new fans and engage current ones. Big retail brands like Kate Spade and Incase know the value of actively sharing fan-exclusive promotions and deals on their Facebook Page.

Kate Spade New York has a “Facebook Exclusive” app that features a special product that can only be viewed and purchased by their Facebook fans. And every week, Incase, a company that sells covers for technology products, hosts a giveaway that’s available only to their email subscribers. These brands inspired us. At ShortStack we're hosting a giveaway every month during 2014. We'll be giving away product and swag.

So what’s the takeaway here? Businesses should not wait for hyped-up holidays or celebrations to host a promotion. Host giveaways and promotions on a consistent basis starting now. Fifty-eight percent of Facebook users expect offers, events or promotions when they become fans, according to Hubspot. With this stat in mind, create a giveaway app for your business’s Timeline to satisfy and engage your business’s new and current fans. Each month, update the giveaway app to feature a new prize or promotion.

To build a monthly giveaway app that can be updated at any time, use ShortStack’s easy-to-customize Sweepstakes template. Click here to watch a short video tutorial on how to use it.

If you'd prefer, you can also create your giveaway app starting with a blank slate – sans help of a template. Click here to learn how to create a ShortStack contest in under two minutes.
This year, if you don’t want to spend money on a customer service platform like Zendesk for your business (or aren’t ready to yet), use a simple support app instead. Your business’s customers, potential customers and fans can use your app to easily submit support questions to your company from your business’s Timeline. Those messages can then be set up to direct to a company email address.

If you’re on ShortStack’s Full Stack plan (or above) you can create your support app and also easily embed it on your business’s website! Your customers now have two places they can send support questions: Your website and Timeline. To learn how to embed your app on an external website, click here.

The fastest way to create a support app is to use ShortStack’s Support Desk template. With the Support Desk template, every time a message is submitted through the support app, you will be notified with a message in your inbox. Here are instructions on how to set up which email address you want your email messages to go to:

• Click the “Edit Form” link within the Edit Widget screen of the Custom Form Widget.

• You will then be taken to the Form Designer. Here, under the “Form Settings” tab and in the “Email Notices” section, insert the email you want email submissions to go to.

To change the subject line of the messages you receive in your inbox, under “Form Settings” in the Form Designer, insert the subject line you want to see in your inbox in the “Email Subject Line” section.
If your business is included in the large percentage of companies that are putting their efforts into content marketing, a resources app can help create great exposure for all your work.

Use a resources app, like the one we have created here, to house all of your most-popular and valuable resources. On the app, you can provide direct downloads to PDFs you’ve created, link to must-read blog articles, videos, and much more. You can update your resources app weekly or monthly.

Feature your resources app on your Timeline to showcase your brand’s latest and greatest content. And use it to drive new Page Likes by fan-gating some or all of your resources – only your fans will have access to them.

To create a simple resources app, use ShortStack’s Product Promotion template. This template will allow you to make a really cool content slideshow of your brand’s various resources. To check out the newly designed Product Promotion template, click here.
February App Ideas

February is not just about Valentine’s Day. There are a couple of other widely celebrated days this month: the Super Bowl and President’s Day. These three big February events are enough to keep business owners on their toes throughout this short month.

To get you and your business ready for February, in this PDF we provide three app ideas. All three app ideas align with this month’s biggest holidays and events. Use this resource to implement these app ideas to set your business up for success.

Let’s get started!

presented by SHORTSTACK
In 2014, more than 111 million Americans watched the Super Bowl – the biggest audience ever! Many of those viewers and sports fans could be your business's customers! Whether you own a coffee shop or an online retail store, the Super Bowl is a fun occasion for any type of business to participate in.

Since there are lots of folks who love watching the big game in February, make the weeks or days leading up to the event fun and filled with anticipation for your Facebook fans. Create a promotion app using ShortStack's “Guess the Score” template! Your fan(s) who guess the final score of the Super Bowl game, win a prize from your business.

To check out the easy-to-use, football-themed “Guess the Score” ShortStack template, click here.
Valentine’s Day Gift-Giving App

Valentine’s Day is a great day to share the love with your fans. For businesses, it’s an ideal day for customer appreciation. To do this, create a Valentine’s-themed app that gives something back to your loyal Facebook followers.

Just for Valentine’s Day, ShortStack created a template and four holiday-appropriate themes. The “Give Some Love Valentine’s” template enables you to provide your fans with downloadable and shareable gifts.

When you log in to ShortStack, we provide you with detailed instructions about how to set up the app and then upload downloadable gifts.

To see and learn more about ShortStack’s Valentine’s Day template and themes, click here to read this short blog post.
For many retailers, President’s Day is a great time to have a sale – it’s a federal holiday and so lots of folks have the day off to go shop! To incentivize your Facebook fans to stop in at your store on President’s Day, use an app to host a deal your fans can print off and take with them to your business to redeem.

The easiest way to build this kind of deal app is to design an app that features a downloadable PDF coupon. With ShortStack, doing this is simple. Click here to check out this video that walks you through the steps on how to build an app with a downloadable coupon.

If you would prefer to create a deal app that reveals a promotion code instead of a printable coupon, you can use ShortStack’s “Fan Only Coupon” template. Click here to check it out.

To take your deal app to the next level, fan-gate your app so that only fans, aka people who have Liked your Facebook Page, can download your deal. Once you’ve fan-gated your app, invest in Facebook ads to drive new users who fit into your business’s ideal audience to your app.

Click here to watch an easy-to-follow video tutorial on how to fan-gate your ShortStack app.

Learn the tools you’ll need to make the most of your Facebook Advertising in this comprehensive guide. Click here to download “How the Pros Use Facebook Advertising”
March App Ideas

March is an exciting month for three reasons: March Madness, South by Southwest (SXSW) and Saint Patrick’s Day! While these three events all appeal to niche audiences, there are thousands of people who participate in them.

If your business doesn’t want to spend major bucks to advertise during one or more of these March events, consider getting creative with a Facebook app. Apps allow your brand to engage with users – without breaking the bank – during the weeks and days before an event even happens. In this PDF, we share three app ideas to help your business do just that!

*Let’s get started!*

*presented by*

[SHORTSTACK]
March Madness Guess-the-Final-Four App

For all you non-basketball fans out there, March Madness is the annual NCAA college basketball tournament that goes on for most of the month. March Madness has grown to become the second most popular sports showcase for advertisers. Only the NFL playoffs have it beat, according to Business Insider. To keep your focus on user engagement during your brand’s March Madness promotional efforts, create a Facebook app that your fans can remember your brand by.

Lots of folks who follow March Madness like to fill out a NCAA Division bracket form to try to guess the winning teams for each game of the tournament. To build a Facebook promotion that allows your fans to guess the teams who will make it to the Final Four and beyond, use ShortStack’s easy-to-use “Basketball Championship” template made especially for the tournament.

To learn how to use this app and how to customize its drop down fields with different team names, click here to watch this video.
South by Southwest (SXSW) is an annual music, film and interactive technology conference/festival held in Austin, Texas. The ten-day-long event attracts nearly 50,000 people from all over the world.

The tickets are pricey so if you’re not able to represent your company at SXSW, but you still want attendees to be aware of your brand, host a giveaway for your fans who are going to the conference.

In 2013, 96 percent of SXSW’s attendees said they use social media, according to a 5,300-respondent survey the festival did. And if there’s one thing social media savvy people understand and use, it’s hashtags! For your SXSW-themed giveaway, host an Instagram contest that requires contest entrants to use a special hashtag in order to be entered to win.

If you have a retail business, your Instagram contest could encourage fans to take an Instagram photo of your product (or a piece of your product) that they brought with them to SXSW. A service-based business could make the Instagram contest more event-specific and ask users to share with your brand an Instagram photo or video of their favorite part of the event.

To create an Instagram contest app using ShortStack, use one of our existing templates. Log in to ShortStack and search for “Instagram” in the Templates section to find them. You can also click here to watch a video tutorial on how to create an Instagram contest with ShortStack.
Saint Patrick’s Day Happy Hour App

Saint Patrick’s Day is a fun day that brings out the Irish in everyone. People celebrate by wearing green, eating corned beef and cabbage, and drinking beer and Irish coffee! For bars, food trucks and restaurants, celebrate the holiday by having themed specials on your March 17th menu.

To promote your Saint Patrick’s Day specials to your Facebook fans, use an app and feature it on your brand’s Timeline. If you’re in the food industry, ShortStack’s go-to template that allows you to display Monday through Sunday specials is our “Sports Bar” template.

The “Sports Bar” template includes Twitter, Foursquare, and food and drink specials for the week. This all-in-one app allows you to tweet about the big game, watch your fans check in, and advertise your happy hour deals all in one spot.

Click here to check out the “Sports Bar” template in action.
April App Ideas

April marks the first full month of spring! To most people, spring means Easter, Earth Day and, of course, spring cleaning. To help you prep your business for the month, in this PDF we have three free app ideas to inspire you.

Let’s get started!
As soon as all the Valentine’s Day candy is cleaned off of store shelves, retailers start preparing for Easter. Easter isn’t just about candy: businesses that share coupons and promotions with their Facebook community get lots of engagement on their Pages.

This Easter, share something special with your fans: the gift of giving! With ShortStack’s new “Virtual Gifts” template, create virtual gifts that your fans can then share on their friends’ Timelines! When a user shares the gift with a friend, the image and description will appear on the friend’s Timeline. When the friend clicks on the gift, it will direct them to the URL that you configure.

The sky’s the limit as to what kinds of virtual gifts you can create for your business’s Easter-themed app. But here’s a tip: images of coupons, vouchers, sales announcements and e-cards do the best.

To see the “Virtual Gifts” template, click here to preview it. You can also click here to watch a short video tutorial on how to use the Virtual Gift Widget.
In recent years, Earth Day has become very popular. As people become more conscious about using sustainable products, brands are listening to the concerns of their customers. So much so, lots of brands are now opting for “green” packaging, materials and other solutions for their products.

If your business offers relevant products or services, use Earth Day as an opportunity to get feedback from your fans about which of your products or services they like best. The simplest way to motivate users to give your brand their insights is to give them a chance to win something awesome.

To do this, use ShortStack’s easy-to-use “Vote to Enter Sweepstakes” template. This template allows you to serve multiple options to your app visitors to vote on when they enter to win your sweepstakes.

To view a video on how to set up a “Vote to Enter Sweepstakes”, click here.
Springtime is a lot like the new year, it’s a great time to start fresh by doing a little spring cleaning. For business owners, spring cleaning can simply mean doing a few new things that will help make your business more efficient.

The number of businesses that value blogging is growing every year. In fact, 86 percent of B2B small business marketers favor blogs as their most effective content marketing tactic, according to the Content Marketing Institute. One of the easiest ways to make promoting your blog on Facebook more efficient is to consolidate all of your brand’s related content in one place.

To do this, use ShortStack’s “Blogger About Me” template to create an app that features blog content, your Twitter feed, a newsletter sign-up form and tabs that link to your business’s website, Facebook Page and Twitter profile. For your Facebook fans, this app is a one-stop shop that informs them about you and keeps them up to speed on nearly everything your brand is publishing online.

To check out the “Blogger About Me” template, click here.
May App Ideas

There's a lot to love about the month of May: Cinco de Mayo is celebrated during the first week; in the middle of the month, moms are given the appreciation they deserve; Memorial Day weekend is an opportunity to travel and share new experiences with friends. And of course, summer is just around the corner!

For businesses, May is an excellent time of year to engage with your warm-weather, holiday-loving Facebook fans -- and even earn new ones.

In this PDF we discuss three Facebook app ideas that are ideal to launch during the month of May. Whether you're a brick-and-mortar business looking for a way to bring people into your store or you're an online business wanting to boost sales, these app ideas are just for you.

*Let’s get started!*
May App Ideas | Page 18

**Cinco de Mayo Printable In-Store Coupon App**

Cinco de Mayo, the day Mexico celebrates both culture and victory over the French, has become a huge celebration in the United States as well. Restaurant, bar and club owners, in particular, can use the occasion to increase foot traffic to their businesses. The best way to do this with Facebook is to create and share a fan-only coupon using a custom Facebook app.

To design a ShortStack app that features a downloadable PDF coupon for your fans to redeem in-store, [check out this video](#) that walks you through the steps.

**You may wonder: How does an in-store coupon app differ from a Facebook Offer?**

There are five main differences between the two. Here they are:

1. Facebook Offers are ads you have to pay for. But if your Page has fewer than 2,000 Likes, you can use ShortStack for free.

2. A Page must have a minimum of 100 Facebook Likes in order to create an Offer. There is no minimum Page Like requirement for installing a Facebook app.

3. Using an app instead of a Facebook Offer to share a coupon with fans allows you to create better exposure for your coupon, since your app thumbnail can be featured on your Timeline for all your Page visitors to see.

4. With an Offer you cannot require that a person Like your Page in order to claim it. Using a fan-gated app, you can require users to Like your Page to access the coupon.

5. You cannot edit an Offer once you have created it. A Facebook app, however, can be edited at any time, so if you ever want to update the coupon for a different event, you can!
For retail businesses such as flower shops, online apparel stores and beauty brands, the best way to drive Mother’s Day sales is by showcasing your best gift items and sharing them with your Facebook community.

To create a Mother’s Day-themed Facebook app that features gift items with the option to outlink and purchase, use ShortStack’s Product Widget.

Use the Product Widget to display and organize gift items and then link users to a webpage where they can purchase the gifts. Here’s a really helpful doc that covers everything you need to know about our Product Widget.

You can also use an Image Widget to display an image of a single product, with all the details of that product in a Rich Text Widget. With the Image Widget you can create a hotspot that outlinks visitors to your web store.

For instructions about how to use the Image Widget, here’s an easy-to-read doc.

For instructions about how to use the Rich Text Widget, here’s another easy-to-read doc.

To learn how to create hotspots or clickable links in the Image Widget, here’s a quick video tutorial.
On Memorial Day weekend, people are traveling, exploring the outdoors and sharing their experiences with friends on the popular photo sharing app Instagram. Did you know Instagram has 150 million monthly active users and 55 million photos are uploaded every day! Instagram photos generate 1.2 billion Likes per day. Wow.

To engage your fans while they’re traveling over the holiday weekend, host an Instagram photo contest on your Facebook Page. For example, if you’re a restaurant owner, ask fans to share an Instagram photo of their favorite Memorial Day meal for a chance to win a free gift certificate to your restaurant. Or if you run a car dealership, ask fans to share their favorite road trip Instagram photos. Remember, your fans will already be sharing photos on Instagram during the weekend so why not motivate them even more by giving them a chance to win something awesome?

With ShortStack’s mobile capabilities, your Facebook fans can keep up with your Facebook contest and submit their entries on the go via their mobile devices. To learn more about ShortStack applications for mobile devices, click here.

For a walkthrough of how to create an Instagram contest with ShortStack, here’s an easy-to-follow video tutorial.

Ready to create your app for May? Get Started Here
June App Ideas

If your business is looking for new ways to increase sales and customer engagement using your Facebook Page, this PDF is for you! We are going to cover three easy-to-implement, surefire custom app ideas that will help your business get the most out of your Page this month.

Let’s get started!

presented by SHORTSTACK

![Image of a person using a laptop with a Facebook app on the screen.]
If you are active on Pinterest, you might already know that it’s a best practice to create themed or seasonal boards. These kinds of boards provide inspiration, encourage sharing and can drive sales.

The best way to gain new exposure for your summer Pinterest boards is to share them on your most popular social platform. Let’s say you have 10,000 fans on Facebook, but only have 100 Pinterest followers. Use Facebook, where you already have influence, to spread content from your less-popular platform, Pinterest.

For example, retail businesses that have created a Pinterest board to feature products they want to promote for June can easily share those boards with their Facebook fans. For example, a food company could showcase popular recipes.

ShortStack has an easy-to-use Pinterest template that lets you feature Pinterest boards on an app. To create an app with the Pinterest template, simply log in to ShortStack, select the orange “Create Tab from Template” button and select “Browse Tags” to find the Pinterest template. At the bottom of the Pinterest template, there are instructions on how to use the template.

To read more about ShortStack’s Pinterest template, click here.
One of the best and easiest ways to earn new leads for your business is to encourage users to opt in to your email newsletter list. An effective way of encouraging users to opt in is to provide an incentive. Research shows that the three biggest motivators for people liking a brand on Facebook are promotions, discounts and giveaways.

To earn new Facebook Likes and email subscribers at the same time, create an app that incentivizes users to opt in to receive a promo code. For example, if you’re a business that wants to reward your Facebook fans by giving them a fan-only promotion code, collect user email addresses so that you can reach users off of Facebook the next time you have something to promote.

To do this with ShortStack, design a Facebook app that has a simple custom form and an effective headline that clearly communicates the incentive of opting in to your business’s email newsletter list. Next, integrate your email marketing service with your custom form.

If your business uses MailChimp as your email marketing provider, click here to download this instructional guide to learn how to integrate your account with your ShortStack app.

Finally, configure your app so that when users enter their email addresses a promo code appears. To do this, use ShortStack’s Starts Hidden widget visibility option.

Click Here to learn how to use the Starts Hidden widget visibility settings.
Limited availability motivates people to buy quickly. For this reason, a limited-time-only sale is one of the most effective approaches to take when hosting a promotion. To run a successful sale this June, create an app that incentivizes and encourages users to act fast!

Similar to the “promo app to incentivize users to opt in” that we covered earlier, this kind of app can also be used to grow your Facebook Likes and email subscriber list. However, the primary goal of an app like this should be to quickly drive sales within a limited period of time.

Using ShortStack's time-based visibility settings, create a limited-time-only promotion app so that when users sign up for your business's email newsletter list they receive a promotion code for your Summer Sale. Just like the app, the promotion code you give should be designed to work for just a short period of time. Make sure this is clear in your app's copy.

To automatically disable a widget when the promotion ends, edit the widget, click the Options tab, expand the Configure Visibility menu and adjust the time-based visibility settings.

To learn more and watch an easy-to-follow video on how to do this, click here.

Ready to create your app for June? Get Started Here
July marks the first full month of summer! For lots of businesses, this is the best month to implement promotions and other strategies that engage summer-loving fans. If you’re in need of inspiration for some ideal Facebook apps to launch during the month of July, we’ve created this PDF with three awesome app ideas, along with information about how to create each – using ShortStack of course.

Let’s get started!
The Fourth of July, also known as National Barbecue Day, is one of the biggest holidays celebrated during the summer. It’s a day of fun, sun and, of course, food!

Independence Day even has a menu all its own. For example, did you know that 155,000,000 hot dogs will be consumed this July 4th? Or that Americans consume 40 percent more beer in July than during any other month of the year. How about this one: 74 million Americans will either host or attend a BBQ! Those numbers are insane and great for holiday trivia! To engage with your fans this Independence Day, put these fun facts to good use and create an interactive quiz app testing your fans’ knowledge of the holiday.

To create a quiz app with ShortStack, click here to read the how-to article on our blog Socially Stacked; it includes a video tutorial and helpful screenshots.

P.S.: You don’t have to limit your quiz app to just the Fourth of July! Think about using a quiz app each month to test users’ knowledge about your brand. You can also add a contest element to your quiz app as an incentive for users to participate. This is a fun way for your fans to learn more about your company, while giving them a chance to win something exclusive from your business.
As fun as it is to celebrate traditional holidays like the Fourth of July, every month there are also dozens of kooky “national holidays” like Sidewalk Egg Frying Day and Embrace Your Geekness Day. We promise we are not making these up! Just Google “July holidays” and you’ll find a long list of silly celebrations.

The point is, you don’t have to wait for a major holiday or season to come around for your business to join in on the holiday fun. In fact, there are a couple of benefits to celebrating lesser known holidays. During the traditional holiday season, between October and December, your business is like that unknown singer who is trying out for American Idol. It’s difficult to stand out because thousands of other hopefuls are standing in line to try out, too. On the other hand, if you celebrate “Sidewalk Egg Frying Day,” you stand out in the crowd.

The holiday app concept also works well when businesses choose to celebrate holidays that align well with their industry or brand. Take, for example, Sutter Home Wine. For National Moscato Day they created a save-the-date app that encouraged users to reach out to their friends and help spread the word about the day.

To create an app like this within ShortStack, use the Image and Friend Invite Widgets. Once you’ve uploaded your image using the Image Widget, create a hotspot over your “RSVP” button that redirects to a Google RSVP form that you’ve created. If you’ve never created an RSVP form with Google docs, click here to learn how. And for instructions on how to create clickable hotspots in the Image Widget, click here for an easy-to-follow video tutorial.

Next, to add sharing to your save-the-date app, create another hotspot that goes to the Friend Invite Widget. To learn more about the Friend Invite Widget, click here to watch this short video.

You can even create additional hotspots on your app that redirect to your website. Sutter Home, for example, made hotspots over their wine bottle images. When users clicked on a wine bottle, the user was redirected to a webpage on Sutter Home’s website with relevant product details.

For a schedule of ShortStack’s live Webinars click here >
If you're a Groupon or Living Social member you've probably noticed that around this time of year you start getting loads of deals from tanning salons, swimwear brands, gyms and yoga studios. Why? It's the time of year when people are showing more skin, which motivates them to look their best for vacations, reunions, weddings, etc.

Now is a great time for businesses to get creative with summer-themed promotions. If you're a company that doesn't want to pay to share your offer, a Facebook app that hosts your deal is a great alternative. Take a note from the upscale San Diego yoga studio Yoga Six. They recently featured an app targeting new students who could purchase their special one-month unlimited yoga pass for $79 directly from the app.

To create a promotions app like Yoga Six's within ShortStack, the process is similar to how you would create your Kooky Holiday Save-the-Date app. Use the Image Widget to create a hotspot over your “Buy” button, which then redirects to a webpage where the user can purchase the deal.

Another option for creating your summer promotions apps is to use one of ShortStack's promotions templates. To find your template, take the following steps:

1. **Create a ShortStack account** (free plan available) or log in to your existing ShortStack account.
2. Click “Templates” in the dark grey bar at the top of the page.
3. Select “Browse tags” to see all the template tags.
4. Choose a template based on your app's concept or theme. In this case, you'll want to select the “promotions” template tag.
5. Once you select the template you want to work with, click the orange “Make Tab” button. This will redirect you to the ShortStack Designer.
6. Add your own content and make your design changes to the app.
August App Ideas

For most people, August means one thing: back to school! For businesses, August is a great time of year to do as the kids do and start reconnecting with friends (i.e., Facebook fans) you haven’t talked to in awhile. One of the best ways to reestablish communication with your fans is to host a contest, promotion or giveaway.

In this month’s PDF, we cover three app ideas that are perfect to launch during the back-to-school season. Each of these back-to-school themed app ideas is designed to boost engagement with your fans.

Let’s get started!

presented by SHORTSTACK
In preparation for the school year, millions of parents and young adults will shop for new school supplies, clothes and technology products. And they will spend a lot of money. In fact, a study done by the National Retail Federation, reports that the average parent spends more than $600 on back-to-school items for their children.

Chances are good that these back-to-school shoppers would like to save some money. Hosting a Facebook giveaway is an easy way to catch their attention.

Instead of doing a traditional giveaway in which one or a few people win a large prize, design the giveaway to allow many winners -- this will encourage more people to enter because the odds of winning are higher. You could award multiple winners $25 gift cards, for example. Or, if you’re a brick-and-mortar retailer, you could create an app that allows fans to access a printable coupon for a “Buy one item, get another item free” offer. If you’re an online retailer, consider creating an app that allows fans to access a free shipping promotion code to use during the month of August.

To learn how to create a printable PDF coupon in ShortStack, click here to watch this short video tutorial.

To create an app that reveals a promo code, use ShortStack’s Widget Visibility settings. Click here to watch this short video tutorial and learn how to create fan gates that reveal special promo content.

**ROI Tip:** To track the return on investment of your back-to-school giveaway app, create one promotion code. For example, the promotion code could be “Back2School.” You’ll be able to determine how much was earned as a result of your giveaway based on the number of people who use your app’s promotion code.
With a school-themed photo-voting contest, there's a lot of room to get creative. The type of contest you run will depend on your business's target audience.

Here are a couple of ideas:

**If your target audience is teens and young adults, try a “Worst School Photo” photo contest**

Lots of people have one really embarrassing school or yearbook photo. It could be a photo from second grade that highlighted a mouthful of oversized teeth, or one that showcased a mullet, too much eye makeup or a questionable fashion choice. These kinds of school photos are fun to look back on. But what's more fun is having a chance to win something in exchange for sharing those embarrassing school shots!

For businesses with playful company cultures, use this app idea to host a school-inspired photo-voting contest that allows your fans to share their most memorable school photos. The uploaded school photo with the most community votes wins!

**If your target audience is primarily parents, try a “First Day of School Jitters” photo contest**

On the first day back to school, lots of parents line their kids up at the front door or at the school bus stop for a photo. The next step, of course, is uploading those photos to Facebook.

Inspired by this parental back-to-school tradition, host a photo-voting contest that allows your fans to upload pictures of their children from the first day of school (don't worry, you can allow entrants to hide first name, last name or both; other identifying information doesn't appear in our Voting Widget). For clothing retail companies, this app idea is especially relevant, as parents would be able to show off their kids’ back-to-school style for a chance to win!

If you decide to implement one of the suggested school-themed photo-voting contests or want to design one of your own, [click here](#) to watch this short video. The tutorial covers how to set up a photo contest with voting in ShortStack.
There are many families for whom buying new shoes, clothing, backpacks and other supplies is difficult. Why not flex your business's philanthropic muscles this year and help some people in need? Team up with a local non-profit organization that offers aid to children and offer to donate necessary items. If you own a brick-and-mortar business, consider setting up bins near the cash registers where customers can donate school supplies. To promote your initiative, create a Facebook app that allows users to locate where your donation bins are, along with other donation details.

You can even add a promotional angle to your philanthropic effort that encourages users to donate: Every customer who brings in a donation gets 10 percent off an in-store purchase. Use your app to spread the word and share information about your business's campaign.

For tips on how to promote your app without spending a dime, [click here](#) to download our latest eBook, “How the Pros Use Facebook Advertising: The Most Up-to-Date Comprehensive Guide.” The first chapter of the eBook covers everything you need to know.

Within ShortStack, to create an app that has an interactive map that allows users to locate a single store location from your app, use the Google Maps Widget. [Click here](#) to watch a quick video tutorial that shows you how to use this feature.

However, if your business has multiple store locations you want to promote, use the Image Widget. With the Image Widget, upload a photo of a map. On the image of the map, create clickable hotspots over the locations of your stores that link users to Google Maps directions.

To learn more about how to create clickable hotspots in the Image Widget, [click here](#) to watch this video tutorial.
September App Ideas

Fall, the traditional kickoff to the holiday season, officially begins on September 22nd. But before you dust off the ornaments and start hanging the lights, make the most of September opportunities! There’s Labor Day weekend, of course, and back-to-school events well into the middle of the month (if you’re still in need of back-to-school app ideas, BTW, check out our August app ideas PDF). But there are also two obscure celebrations this month – World Gratitude Day and Swap Ideas Day – that present exciting opportunities for businesses that want to start a two-way conversation with fans.

In this month’s PDF goodie, we give you three app ideas that correspond to three unique September events. These app ideas are easy to implement and are designed to help you engage with fans in ways that will make your business stand out, and allow you to gather valuable insights from your online audience.

Let’s get started!

presented by

SHORTSTACK
Since its March 2010 launch, Pinterest has grown to more than 70 million users. What’s more, those users are dedicated and active on the platform. According to Pinterest Insider, the average time spent on Pinterest is 98 minutes a month!

A lot of Pinterest’s users are also on Facebook. In fact, 9 million Pinterest users reportedly have connected their Pinterest accounts to Facebook. So it’s no wonder that the popularity of businesses hosting Pinterest contests has skyrocketed within this past year.

To engage your Pinterest-loving Facebook fans, use the first week of September to host a Labor-Day inspired Pinterest contest of your own! Hosting a “Pin and Win” contest is a great way to convert Facebook fans into new Pinterest followers. It’s also an easy way to grow your email newsletter list! To do this, use a Promotion Widget and require that contest entrants give their name and email address for a chance to win.

Hosting a Pin and Win contest is simple. To learn how to create a Pin and Win Contest app with ShortStack, click here to watch an easy-to-follow video tutorial.

To learn step-by-step how to grow your email list using a Facebook contest app, click here to download a free PDF instructional guide.
There’s real power and value in saying, “Thank you.” Especially when it's done unexpectedly. The truth is, most people don't expect gestures of gratitude from businesses. But it’s an opportunity to stand out. Take a lesson from social media thought leader Gary Vaynerchuk. He explains this concept and why it's important for businesses to give back when it's not expected – [click here](#) to watch it.

In honor of World Gratitude Day on September 21st, create an app that your business can use to say “Thanks” to all those awesome people online who are saying nice things about your business.

Instead of featuring it on your business’s Timeline, publish the app to a Page that no one else knows about. Then, when someone on Facebook – or any other social network – says something nice about your business and you see it, you can send that person a link to your “secret” Thank You app. Only the users who have been given the link will have access to it.

You can design your Thank You app to reveal a special promotion code or use a custom form for users to fill out to receive an exclusive gift, like a t-shirt.

To design an app that features a custom form that users fill out to receive an exclusive gift, use the Custom Form Widget. [Click here](#) to learn more.

To design an app that reveals a promotion code, use the Image Widget. [Click here](#) to watch a video that shows you how to do this.
If you're planning to introduce new products during the fall season, customer feedback can help you make sure you give your customers what they want. One easy way to do this is through a crowdsourcing app.

For instance, if you own a restaurant and are updating your menu for fall, create an app that asks users to select from a few options which seasonal items they want to see on your new menu. Or, if you're a coffee shop, ask fans to vote on their favorite fall drink. Again, include just a few options to choose from. Make this process of voting easy and use visuals whenever possible.

The response you get back from your fans will give you insight into which products are most popular, and which products you should promote or feature more during your fall campaigns.

This kind of crowdsourcing app idea is perfectly timed with Swap Ideas Day, September 10th. On Swap Ideas Day people are encouraged to share thoughts, get creative and learn from the ideas of others. For businesses, the spirit of this holiday is inherently beneficial. Ask fans and customers for their ideas often, and listen well to what they have to say.

To create a crowdsourcing app within ShortStack, similar to the restaurant and coffee shop examples explained above, use the Poll Widget. The Poll Widget lets you pose a question and allows users to vote for one of the available options.

To learn more about the Poll Widget, click here to watch this short video tutorial.
October App Ideas

October marks the first official month of fall! There are three events on the calendar during this month that should inspire your business to engage: National Do Something Nice Day, National Tell a Story Day and Halloween (of course)! In this month’s PDF we share three app ideas that coincide with each of these three holidays.

If you want to grow your fan base and engage with fans before the rush of the holiday season begins, these app ideas are for you! Also, in light of Facebook’s latest promotion guidelines change, we’ll share a couple of awesome Timeline promotion ideas that are perfect to implement during October; you’ll find them at the end of this PDF. There’s lots to cover so...

*Let’s get started!*
October 5th is National Do Something Nice Day! To celebrate the holiday with your fans, create an app that rewards fans with a coupon when they sign up for your newsletter. The awesome thing about this app is that you can either host it during the month of October only, or let it live on your Timeline all year long!

For businesses that want to build their mailing list for upcoming holiday email marketing efforts, an app that incentivizes users to opt in is exactly what you need.

Most people want something in return for an email opt-in, making an incentive like a coupon or deal super valuable. How valuable? According to a report from analytics company Syncapse, a whopping 42 percent of Facebook fans Like a brand’s Page in order to gain access to a coupon or discount!

And here’s another awesome stat: According to a study by marketing company Crowdtap, 67.2 percent of survey respondents chose digital coupons (the most popular option) as the type of content they were most likely to share on Facebook during the holiday season.

This kind of app, when fan-gated, allows your business to grow your mailing list and drive new Page Likes fast. Here’s how it works: When an app visitor subscribes to your brand’s email newsletter and Likes your Page, the new fan is then rewarded with a holiday coupon that can be downloaded from the app.

To create a newsletter app that incentivizes mailing list signups by offering a coupon to everyone who subscribes, use ShortStack’s Subscribe to Receive a Coupon Template. To learn how to use this template, click here.

And to learn how to fan-gate your app, click here to watch this simple video tutorial on Widget Visibility Settings.
October 2nd is National Poetry Day, making it the perfect time to host an “essay” promotion! Host a Facebook giveaway promotion that invites fans to share a short poem for a chance to win an awesome prize from your brand. You can keep it simple and ask users to share their favorite fall story or memory, written as a poem, or you can take a crowdsourcing approach.

Implement this app concept if your business is planning to introduce new products for the fall season. If you own a coffee shop, for example, and are updating your menu for fall, create an essay promotion app that allows users to submit written entries about which seasonal items they are most looking forward to seeing on your menu. The essay/poem entry or entries that ultimately inspires your next fall menu item can win a prize – something like a gift card from your business would be appropriate.

If there are multiple requests for the same type of product, use that insight to determine which products you should promote or feature during your fall campaigns.

By the way, don’t get too hung up on the name of this app idea. “Essay” just implies that users can submit written entries. (Most Facebook users would not do that much work to win something like a coffee shop gift card.)

To create an essay contest with ShortStack, click here to watch a video tutorial on how to set up the appropriate promotion form. You can also click here to learn more about ShortStack’s easy-to-use Essay Contest Template.
In 2013, Instagram added video! This feature has lots of businesses and brands excited. Why? For brands that want to host a video contest on Facebook, Instagram video makes it way simpler and faster (compared with uploading a video to YouTube or Vimeo) for contest participants to create and submit their video entries.

To do something special for your fans this Halloween, host an Instagram video contest! Ask users to create videos of their Halloween fun, like a film of their pumpkin carving party or their family members’ homemade Halloween costumes, or perhaps a how-to-bob-for-apples video. The whole idea is to get creative with the kinds of video submissions your entrants give you. And whatever you do, try to make the video contest relevant to your brand.

When you host an Instagram contest, be sure to use a hashtag specific to your company – this will allow you to better track contest entries and the conversation your users are having about you.

For a walkthrough of how to create an Instagram contest with ShortStack, click here to read this blog post – it covers everything you need to know!

P.S. With ShortStack’s mobile capabilities, your Facebook fans can keep up with your Facebook Instagram video contest and submit their entries on the go via their mobile devices. To learn more about ShortStack applications for mobile devices, click here.
Facebook now allows businesses to host promotions without using a third-party app. October is a perfect month to try a Timeline Promotion. To make the most of the data you collect, use our Comment/Like Importer tool.

Here are two simple Timeline promotion ideas to implement this October:

1. **Timeline Halloween-themed photo-voting contest:** Facebook allows users to comment on a post with a photo. This feature allows brands to host photo-voting contests on the Timeline!

   This October, host a “comment-with-a-photo-to-enter” Timeline promotion. The photo comment with the most likes, i.e., votes, wins! For businesses that get lots of entries, use ShortStack’s Comment/Like Importer to import all the photos and each one’s total Likes to easily select a contest winner.

2. **Like-to-enter Timeline promotion to get the word out about your Fall in-store sale:** If you own a brick-and-mortar store, host a Timeline contest this October to promote your in-store promotion. Upload a photo with your Timeline promotion post that gives details about your deal or promotion. Next, ask users to Like your post to enter to win.

   For businesses that want to drive lots of Like entries on their Timeline promotion post, keep it simple by asking a yes or no question. For instance, you can ask, “Who loves fall sales? Like this post for a chance to win an awesome prize!”
The more simple you keep your Timeline contests, the better. Users don’t have to think, they just have to click “Like” and they’re entered! An appropriate prize would be a gift card to your store. This kind of Timeline promotion idea is great for rewarding one (or a few) of your loyal Facebook fans and getting the word out about your store’s sale, thus bringing in some extra foot traffic and sales!

Remember: The only way to really drive Page Likes with a Facebook contest or promotion is to host it using a fan-gated app. There are nine other reasons why promotion apps are still valuable – click here to read a blog post that explains them all.

There’s lots to know about Facebook’s new promotion guidelines. To avoid getting buried in all the articles on the web about it, here’s a short roundup of the best ones we’ve found so far:

Facebook Timeline Promotions Are Now Legal: What You Need to Know

Your Top Questions About Facebook’s New Timeline Promotion Guidelines – Answered!

Best Practices for a Facebook Timeline Contest/ Promotion

5 Awesome Timeline Contest Ideas

If you’re new to ShortStack and need a jumpstart getting going on the platform, click here to sign up for one our free webinars!
November App Ideas

During November and December, retailers can expect to do approximately one third of their annual sales. Forty-five percent of American shoppers used social media to “assist in holiday shopping” in 2013, according to Deloitte. Shoppers used social media to research gift ideas, find discounts, read reviews and “likes,” browse products and go to retailers’ fan pages.

We know it’s important for you to prep your business early for the holidays, especially when it comes to your social media efforts. Inside, we share three awesome app ideas for your business, or your client’s business, to try out this month. Whatever your holiday goals, we’ve got a November-inspired app idea for you.

*Let’s get started!*
The holiday season is just as much about giving as it is receiving. The perfect opportunity to give back this season is on November 13th: World Kindness Day. World Kindness Day is an annual event that's celebrated globally. The premise of the day is simple: Do something that will help someone or improve your community. (If you need some inspiration for what your business can do to celebrate World Kindness Day, visit the website Random Acts of Kindness. It is full of fantastic ideas.)

Since Thanksgiving is celebrated later this month, why not create a simple food drive app that could help bring in donations of healthy food to people in need who live in your region. Check out this Map the Meal Gap interactive map from Feeding America which highlights hunger region by region.

A food drive app can motivate your community to contribute to this cause at a local level. Use your food drive app to create awareness for your business’s efforts and to direct people to a food drop-off location.

Within ShortStack, to create an app that has an interactive map that allows users to locate a single food drive location from your app, use the Google Maps Widget. Click here to watch a quick video tutorial that shows you how to use this feature.

If your business has multiple food drive locations you want to promote, use the Image Widget. With the Image Widget, upload a photo of a map. On the image of the map, create clickable hotspots over the locations of your stores to link users to Google Maps directions. Click here for a video tutorial that walks you through these steps.
For lots of folks, fall is the one time of year when baking sheets and fancy mixers get liberated from kitchen cabinets. Whether your business is in the food industry or not, in the fall, most people are open to receiving and swapping awesome holiday recipes.

If your business has some great holiday recipes, why not share them with your Facebook fans? Start by asking your employees to share with you their favorite family holiday recipes or favorite video recipes they’ve found on YouTube. Next, use an app to display the holiday recipes so your Facebook fans can use and share them!

It’s super easy to create a fall recipes display app with ShortStack – all you have to do is use the Culinary template. With this template, you can feature recipe details, videos, a Twitter feed, an interactive map and more.

If you want, you can even turn your recipe app into a promotion! To do so, use the Voting Widget to give your fans a chance to vote on their favorite recipes or videos.

In the Culinary template, the default in the Voting Widget is set to say “Recommend.” To change this to say “Vote” instead, click the pencil icon to edit the Voting Widget. Next, expand the “Override Labels, Messages and Other Text” menu and delete the three labels in the fields that use Recommend – now the default text (Vote) will be used. Lastly, click “Save.”

To learn more about the Culinary template, click here to watch an easy-to-follow video tutorial.
Black Friday and Cyber Monday are two of the biggest shopping days of the year. On these days, most businesses host promotions to drive store foot traffic, website visits and, of course, sales.

It sometimes seems like every business is running a Black Friday or Cyber Monday sale. The question is: How can you make sure your customers and fans remember yours? One of the most effective ways to remind people of your business’s promotion is to put it in their Google calendars. It might sound impossible to do, but it’s not!

First, create a Google calendar event for your holiday event and click “Edit event.” At the bottom of the Edit event page, select the blue hyperlink titled “Publish event.” A box of code will appear. Copy only the link within the quotation marks beginning with https://www.google.com.

Next, in ShortStack, use the Image Widget to create an RSVP button with a hotspot. If you’re not sure how to do this, click here to watch a video tutorial. Insert the text you copied from your Google calendar event into the hotspot entry field of your Image Widget. This will create an RSVP button on your app that, when clicked, allows your app visitors to quickly save your event to their Google Calendars.
December App Ideas

December is the month for consumer spending. Black Friday, which occurs in November, has a reputation as the biggest shopping day of the year, but it’s not the only big day. Super Saturday, or the Saturday before Christmas, is when thousands of last-minute shoppers head to stores to buy their gifts.

Super Saturday is one of many reasons December is the month you should put your marketing efforts into high gear (details below on how to make the most of this day). In this month’s PDF, we share three awesome app ideas that will help your business make the most of this important time of year.

Let’s get started!
Have you ever offered free shipping to your customers? Did you notice a spike in sales? Lots of retailers offer free shipping on a specific day in December as an incentive for their customers to place orders that can be delivered in time for Christmas. According to Free Shipping Day’s official site (yes, there’s a website devoted to free shipping!), over the past two years, consumer spending on Free Shipping Day has exceeded $1 billion and the day has become the third-busiest day for online shopping in the U.S.

According to Free Shipping Day’s founder Luke Knowles, 90 percent of consumers spend more when they are offered free delivery. This stat might just encourage you to participate in Free Shipping Day this year.

If you do decide to participate in Free Shipping Day, here’s a tip: Offers that include a discount such as “10% Off” in addition to free shipping get the best response.

To let your Facebook fans know your business is celebrating Free Shipping Day, create an app to promote the day and to drive fans back to your ecommerce site to place orders.

To do this within ShortStack, use the Image Widget to feature your Free Shipping Day promotion code and to create a separate button with a hotspot to link back to your online store. To create clickable buttons on your app using the Image Widget, click here to watch an easy-to-follow video tutorial.

You can also create your Free Shipping Day Promo Code app using ShortStack’s “Fan Only Coupon” template. Use this template to offer a coupon or discount code to your fans. Click here to view the template.
In December, most companies run their big annual holiday sales. These sales usually last for a couple weeks and occur right before Christmas. Super Saturday – the final Saturday before Christmas – is the most popular of all the shopping days that happen during this period.

Millions of people will do their last-minute holiday shopping on this day.

To incentivize last-minute shoppers to do their shopping at your store or website, create a Facebook app using ShortStack’s “Subscribe to Receive Coupon” template. This template is super cool because it allows your business to grow your email list really fast so come next holiday season you already have an awesome list to use to promote your most current holiday promotion.
According to a recent Gallup poll, about 95 percent of Americans celebrate Christmas every year, and up to 80 percent of non-Christian Americans celebrate the holiday! These numbers should tell you one thing: Christmas is not a holiday your business can afford to ignore.

This December, in the days leading up to Christmas, host a multi-day giveaway contest in which you give out prizes every day throughout the month. Do this by displaying a prize to be given away each day of the countdown – you can show a promo code, an image, or a link!

Extended giveaway promotions that support multiple contest winners often have the highest engagement. They also help to drive the most new fans/Page Likes. Why? Because when multiple prizes are being given away every day for an extended length of time, people are encouraged to follow the contest. And the best way to keep up with a brand’s contest is to Like their Page.

The easiest way to host an extended Christmas giveaway is to use ShortStack’s newest Holiday Calendar Template. With this template, you can create an “XX Days of Christmas.” The template is set with 12 reveal days, but you can modify it to include as few or as many days as you want within a single month (Note: You can’t skip days).

Click here to learn more about the Holiday Calendar Template.